

Orgyia antiqua* (L.) (Lep.: Lymantriidae) larvae on Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum

In an interesting note on the larvae of certain Lepidoptera species feeding on Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, Lewis, Lord and Baker (2005. *Ent. Rec.* **117**: 47-48) record finding larvae of the Vapourer *Orgyia antiqua* feeding on this, which were reared to pupation, in Glamorgan during a survey carried out between 2002 and 2004. They state that they were unable to find a previous record of the species using this plant.

On 27 August 1998, at Gutter Mire, Devon (VC 3) (O. S. grid reference SX 5866) I found a few larvae of this species on Bracken fronds. I did not keep any to prove that they would eat this, but am sure that this was their foodplant. This is because the area comprised fairly heavily grazed grass with some moss and a little heather, but no plants taller than Bracken, and so there were no trees or bushes on which the larvae might have been feeding and then fallen onto the Bracken.— R. J. HECKFORD, 67 Newnham Road, Plympton, Plymouth, Devon PL7 4AW.

***Ruspolia nitidula* (Scopoli) (Orth.: Tettigoniidae) in Dorset**

On or about the evening of 7 September 2005, while cycling after dark along the promenade at Canford Cliffs, Poole, JD heard a very loud and unfamiliar stridulation apparently emanating from a gorse bush at the foot of the cliffs and immediately adjacent to the promenade. On hearing JD's account of his find, and after questioning him closely on 2 October, MJS thought that the stridulation was suggestive of the Large Cone-head *Ruspolia nitidula*. Nothing was to be heard when MJS visited the locality that evening in rather cool conditions, nor was he able to find anything during a daytime search the following day. On 6 October, a much warmer evening, MJS arrived on the scene at 19.20 hours, it being already dark. At first nothing could be heard, and he walked about a hundred metres along the promenade, listening out with a bat-detector. As he made his way back towards the place where the insect had originally been heard the bat-detector suddenly picked up a loud and continuous stridulation unlike anything MJS had ever heard. With the bat-detector tuned to the peak frequency, which seemed to lie just below 20 kHz, the sound had an extraordinary resonance, ringing like a very loud alarm-clock. After walking about fifty metres MJS came to within a few feet of the bush-cricket. Now, with the unaided ear, he could clearly make out occasional very high-pitched "squeaks" inserted into the uniform buzzing, as described by Bellmann (1985 *Heuschrecken. Beobachten, bestimmen. Melsungen*), but which Ragge and Reynolds (1998 *The Songs of the Grasshoppers and Crickets of Western Europe*. Harley Books) did not detect in their recordings of the species. At this point JD arrived and with the help of two torches we soon discovered the insect, a male *Ruspolia nitidula*.